

Pre- Budget Consultation Presentation

On behalf of the Town of Bay Roberts

The Town begins by thanking the Department of Finance and Government for the opportunity to provide this presentation for the Pre-Budget Consultations. Additionally, the Town is extremely pleased to make this presentation in Bay Roberts itself – a first! This presentation will focus on the priorities and issues that have been identified by Council on behalf of the Town of Bay Roberts and its residents.

The following, in no particular order of preference, are some of those issues;

- A) **Mult –Year Capital Works Funding (MYCW)**. This funding remains an essential component for communities such as Bay Roberts. Revenue received by the Town presently is achieved primarily through taxation (property & business taxes) and is always difficult to balance considering our size and the fact that many communities in Newfoundland & Labrador (NL) have many of its residents on fixed incomes. In addition, much of our infrastructure is aging. To compound the situation for Bay Roberts, in a very positive way I might add, is the fact that Bay Roberts, due to a variety of different reasons, is dealing with an upswing in its population. In both the 2006 and 2011 census the population grew – by 4% in 2006 & 8% in 2011. This growth also puts additional pressures on the Town. Bottom Line MYCW Funding is **essential** and must be maintained and indeed, increased (if possible) despite the opposite opinion of some who call for its elimination in cases.

Continuing with the current theme centering on MYCW Funding, it is important for the Department of Municipal Affairs to look at how this funding when announced is able to be accessed by Towns. The town will acknowledge that it appears to be improving over past years however; it urges government to continue its efforts in getting MYCW monies out to towns as **quickly and as easy** as possible.

- B) As a part of the Town's request under its 3 year Multi - Year Funding requests, Bay Roberts would like to point out that one of its priorities is to seek **assistance in replacing its 45 + year old pool**. A pool incidentally, that initially was only designed to be an outside pool. In order to help facilitate this goal, a feasibility study was completed

approximately five years ago by council to get the input of our residents and its needs as it relates to such a facility. That need and interest was **clearly** identified and is still there today. Indeed, as indicated Bay Roberts and the surrounding communities have shown terrific growth in recent years. Not only would such a facility be used and needed by the Town's residents but also the residents of the surrounding communities as well. Thus, there is undeniably a regional need to replace the current building that is currently in place.

- C) Bay Roberts also endorses the call of MNL for a **new Fiscal / Funding arrangement** being established between the Province and Municipalities. In particular, the concept of refunding the Provincial portion of the HST those towns now have to pay to the provincial government. The provincial government does not pay tax while the federal government refunds its portion of the HST back to Towns. It is **extremely unfair** to have the least vulnerable part of Government in NL, as it relates to being a revenue generator, pay taxes on such things as capital purchases and water and sewer projects (design costs) that the provincial government ironically in many cases is the prime source of funding. The Town understands that if the HST is refunded to communities that the bottom line of the provincial government will be affected however, both are involved in trying to meet the needs of its residents. Considering that the sources of revenue for Municipalities are very limited, we are asking that the provincial government give this suggestion, along with others, **very** serious consideration in the 2015 Budget.
- D) **Coley's Point Primary (CPP) School** – This school needs to be replaced!!! There is simply no other way to say it. The school has served students, the residents and our community for 60+ years very admirably. However, the time has come to replace it. It has outgrown itself in today's time and world and in meeting the educational needs of its students. The Gym is too small, the staff room has been used as a computer lab, a janitorial closet has been taken to be used as a classroom, the school population is growing, the needs of its current parking lot and location are dated and it does not have a lunch room for its students, the majority of whom are bused to the school. Indeed, it is clear to see that the educational needs of its students would be met much more effectively and efficiently with the school being replaced with an updated more modern school. In the 2013 monies were allocated to study doing just that along with such things as site selection. In the 2015 Budget the School Community and residents of the Town would like to see funding allocated for the **actual physical** replacement of CPP School – the process has started let it continue - it is long overdue.

E) In the census of 2006 and 2011 the Town of Bay Roberts and the surrounding communities showed positive growth. At one time a number of **Government Service Centers / Offices** were located in the Town. In other cases they were scheduled to come to the Town and at the last minute their coming here were cancelled. On behalf of the Town and the surrounding communities and their residents, I humbly ask that this trend not only stop but indeed be reversed. Our communities are being made up more and more by people with a variety of needs including, a rising senior population, it is of the utmost necessity that they have access to many of the Government services that directly impact upon them.

In conclusion, once again the Town of Bay Roberts thanks the Department of Finance for this opportunity to outline the needs of our community in our own community. As stated in your preamble, "difficult decisions will have to be made" however, it is our belief that our requests are more than reasonable and realistic based upon a very real need of a growing community and area.

Thank-You!!